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# Religious communities as interlocutors for the local policy making. An exploratory study on the cases of Italy and Rome

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## Résumé

The 'visibility' and 'voice' of religion in the public/political sphere is a feature of contemporary western/European societies which is increasingly shown also in Italy. However, to date, it is not sufficiently studied and monitored in its specific achievements.

The paper addresses the topic from a political and sociological perspective, analyzing processes linked to a set of cases differently attesting the way Italian political institutions and religious groups interact and eventually collaborate in recent experiences of policy making.

The cases are: 1. the production of national legislative programmatic documents, such as the 'Charter of the Values of Citizenship and Integration' (Minister of Interior, 2006); the Integration Agreement (Minister of Interior, 2009) and the 'The National Plan for Integration in a framework of security (Council of Ministers, 2010); 2. the establishment of official institutional authorities for the representation of religious groups and interreligious dialogue at the national level (e.g. the 'Interreligious Table for Integration', Council of Ministers, Department for Equal Opportunities, 2014); 3. the creation of similar authorities active in Rome's municipality (e.g. the 'Consult of Religions' and the 'Interreligious Table') and other experiences realized at the very local level (e.g. the 'Interreligious Table' at the city Municipality VI 'Delle Torri').

The paper develops the analysis according to the notion of postsecular society, clarifying its sociological conditions and capacity to give tools for the empirical reading of context-dependent processes. This lens leads to interpret the selected cases with attention towards: the conditions of interaction and particularly the inclusion/exclusion of minority groups; the representations spread among secular and religious actors concerning religion, religious pluralism and the public/political sphere; the disposition of secular institutions and religious representatives towards reflexivity, mutual understanding and 'complementary learning' processes; the results of the experiences of cooperation among different actors in terms of consolidation of procedures and their reproducibility.

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